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THE  
EXAMINER  
EXAMIN'D.

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IN A  
LETTER  
TO THE  
ENGLISHMAN:

Occasion'd by the  
EXAMINER of *Friday Dec. 18. 1713.*

Upon the  
Canto of *Spencer.*

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The SECOND EDITION.

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L O N D O N:  
Printed for J. Roberts, in Warwick-lane, 1713.

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EXAMINER  
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IN A  
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TO THE  
MUSEUM  
BRITAN  
NICUM  
MAN:

EXAMINER OF Friday Dec. 18. 1713.

Upon the

Case of Spencer.

The Second Edition.

Printed by J. Smith, in the Strand, 1713.



**SIR,**

**A**S you have often agreed with me in my Opinion of the mean, dull, incoherent, unintelligible Manner in which most of the EXAMINERS are penn'd; so I remember you have always said, you thought this declamatory Author never shew'd himself a Blockhead in so clear a Light as when he ventur'd to touch upon any Subject that had the least Relation to the *Belles Lettres*; and this I think you made sufficiently plain in his Paper upon the Tragedy of *Cato*, and some others. And since you are now pleas'd to ask what I think of his Paper of yesterday, I shall here answer your Request.

About three Weeks before, (all which time the EXAMINER took to consider of the Matter) there came out a Poem called, *An Original CANTO of SPENCER, design'd as Part of his Fairy Queen, but never printed; now made publick, by NESTOR IRONSIDE, Esq;* This Poem, whoever was the Author, or whatever

was the Design of it, was, I think, at least allow'd by every body to be a very just and ingenious Imitation of SPENCER's manner of Writing; and it was accordingly very much bought up, read, and admir'd. But out at last comes the EXAMINER, and criticises this Piece of Poetry, being very jealous of the Praise of an Author, and willing always, was he but as able, to take *even the Life away* of any one that writes better than himself. And how doth he set himself about it? why, very pleasantly you'll say, for he begins thus: *It is not my way to make my self either the Publisher or Interpreter of a Writer's Works, but that Piece is now freely dispers'd; and by being written with a little more Spirit than has for some time appear'd in the Performances of that Party, is gotten into vogue: They all agree to write up, and tell us the Meaning of it without Reserve.* You will now, I hope, acquit him of the Crime of being either the Interpreter or Publisher; you shall now observe his Criticisms, every one of which I shall give you in his own Order. *The Contrivance and Fable of the Poem are Uncouth and Antick enough.* Perhaps he means Mimick. *The Diction and Sentiments imitate Spencer, even to a Degree of Affectation.* This is strange indeed in an Author who affects to imitate SPENCER. *Some Expressions (such as Kennelling, &c.) are offensive to the Stomach.* This he judges by his own, and that indeed I always thought was not good by the Disorder of his Head \*, and the

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\* Vid. Hippocrat. Aphor. 50.



Badness of his Taste. But here follows the most cutting Remark of all, which indisputably shows the poor Poet's Ignorance; and this is put into a Query to Country Squires, whether the Epithet *Generous* is more applicable to an *honest English Cur*, or to a *satyrising foreign Spaniel*? What Answer the Country Squire will give I can't tell; but this I'll say, that a *Brave Loyal Englishman* is better than a *Servile French Examiner*.

And thus end all his wise and learned Remarks; but to make up the Business of the Day, and gain his Hire, it was requisite to have a Beginning and Ending, besides this little something between. Accordingly he sets out with a Motto out of *Virgil*, with a *fly Design* to reflect upon the Author of the Poem for not having been acute and quick-sighted enough to have discover'd and applied it to his *Archimago*, with whom it suits better than any Motto that could have been found in all the *Classic Writers*. It relates to one *Circe*, an Arch-Enchantress in Days of yore; who, by Virtue of her Magic Wand, turn'd all the Servants of *Ulysses* into brute Beasts, except one, and he was forc'd to fly for it. And thus much for the Motto, by which our EXAMINER meant to shew his *Classic Learning*; but now you must know he is as well read at least in our own Country Poets: Accordingly, by way of Prologue to all those learned Remarks I have mention'd, he says, *We are the celebrated Originals, who began to decide State Affairs by the Couplet, and to deliver our Sentiments of Government*.

ment in Rhime, and that Faction was first display'd in the English Tongue. Thus something of this kind is to be found in our English Chaucer, Gower, the Visions of Pierce Plowman, and the Fragments of Robert of Gloucester. But here I know you'll ask, What doth the Sot mean by the Fragments of Robert of Gloucester? Nor can I tell you, but as there is a compleat History of England, written by Robert of Gloucester, from the Beginning to his own time, I suppose the Scribler had heard of his Name as well as that of the others, and so put it down; but as for any thing of what he calls State-Poetry, I don't know what he means, except it be these four following Lines in the Reign of Henry the 2d, when he tells us, the Barons, after some Dispute, at last perswaded the King

To remue the Frenshe men to live beyonds se  
By hor londes her and ther, and no come noght age,  
And to granti god lawes, and the old Charter also,  
That so ofte was igranted her, and so ofte undo.

But now as for Robert Langland, the Author of *Pierce Plowman*, the EXAMINER, was he able to read a Word of him, might make a Nestor Ironside, or what he pleas'd of him, for his whole Book is nothing else but a Church and State Poem, and tho' he wrote a-  
bout



about the Year 1350, yet as Dr. Hicks observes, he makes a perfect Description of the Reformation in Hen. 8th's Time. Thus good Poets you see have been Prophets, and will, I hope, always be so.

That Wight must needs be one Day glorified,

Who against lawless Powers and tortious Wrong,

With fierce Avengement gallantly doth ride.

Canto of *Spencer*, Stanza 46.

And now our EXAMINER, after having made this Discovery of his Reading in our own English Poets, returns again to his Classic Authors, and will have it known he has read *Horace*, or *Dacier's Horace* at least. Thus, says he, when *Horace* was suspected to have written one *State-Ode*, which begins thus,

*O Navis, referent in mare te novi  
Fluctus, &c.*

wherein he is suppos'd to have given Hints of some Fears, Jealousies and Dangers to the Publick, which did by no means become him, and which are contrary to the jolly Humour he so often assumes in many other Places, where he leaves these important Affairs to the Men whose Province it is to be troubled with them; one or two of our Commentators have, with a very refin'd Judgment, vindicated

located the Poet's Honour in this Point, and plainly proved  
 that there is no State Rarrel or Allegory in those Ex-  
 pressions. Now to pass by the Reasons he gives why  
 this is no Allegorical Ode, as because of Horace's jolly  
 Humour, &c. I shall observe to you, that those one or  
 two of our Commentators are Faber and his Son in law  
 Dacier, in spite of whom and the EXAMINER to boot,  
 this will still pass for an Allegorical Ode. For *Quin-*  
*tilian*, who I fancy understood Horace as well as the  
 EXAMINER, declares it to be so, and instances in this  
 very Ode to shew what an Allegory is. *Acron* and  
*Porphyrion*, and Fifty Commentators more, have been  
 all of the same Opinion; and indeed the thing was  
 in it self so plain, that no body ever presum'd to  
 doubt it, till about fifty Years since, *Tanagui Fabre*,  
 in a Letter to a Friend, tells him, That dining *to* other  
 Day with a Colonel of the *Guards*, when his Belly  
 was full, and the Cloth was taken away, he fell  
 reading Horace, and then this jolly Thought came in  
 to his Head, That tho' for near sixteen hundred Years  
 this had been taken for a State Ode, (as the EXAMINER  
 calls it) yet it should now be so no longer. But now I  
 shall shew you, that Horace not only makes use of  
 an Allegory here, but that he has put the very same  
 Allegory into Verse, which his Patron *Mecenas* had  
 formerly made use of in his Speech to *Augustus*, to  
 perswade him not to resign his Crown, (or whate-  
 ver else the EXAMINER will please to call it.) Our  
 State (says he) like some great Ship, containing  
 many different sorts of People, without a Pilot, has  
 now for some Time been shaken with Tempests,  
 " and



“ and like an unballasted Vessel, been tost this Way  
 “ and that. Don't you now, therefore, forsake it in its  
 “ Distress; and because you see it almost sinking, take  
 “ away all the Hope that's left. A corrupted State it  
 “ is, and seems to be arriv'd at the last Moments of  
 “ its Existence. Since, therefore, the Gods have set  
 “ you at the Head of it, don't betray your Coun-  
 “ try, but as it was *sometime* happy under your Influ-  
 “ ence, so let it, by your Means, remain secure to Po-  
 “ sterity.

Thus you see, Sir, *Horace*, in this Ode, makes a  
 Compliment to *Mecenas*, and a greater can't be made  
 by an Author to a Man of Quality, who sets up for a  
 Patron of Wit, than by making use of some of his Ex-  
 pressions. But *Horace*, says the EXAMINER, was ne-  
 ver so much as suspected of writing but this one State-  
 Ode, which I must beg leave to deny, since one at  
 least, of the finest in his Works, I mean the third of  
 the third Book, must be allow'd to be such. For in  
 this, *Horace* (however the EXAMINER may think it  
*might become him*) presumes to make himself *Augustus's*  
 Counsellor, and to direct him what he ought to do, if  
 he would continue the Blessing of the Gods upon him.  
 There had been a Report, a little before *Julius Caesar's*  
 Death, that he design'd to remove the Seat of Empire,  
 and rebuild old Mother Troy, and it was still much fear'd  
 that his Heir *Augustus* would pursue the Design. This  
 justly alarm'd all honest Romans, nor could they bear  
 to think that for the Caprice of a Prince,

*The Mistress of the World, the Seat of Empire,*  
*The Nurse of Heroes, the Delight of Gods,*  
*That humbled the proud Tyrants of the Earth,*  
*And set the Nations free,*  
*That Rome should be no more.*

Whereupon *Horace* frames this admirable Ode to turn *Augustus* from his purpose. And it was so far from being thought that he had done amiss in it, that *Virgil*, the modestest Poet that ever liv'd, as the EXAMINER very well observes, follows his Example, and in the twelfth Book, where *Juno* is at length reconciled to the *Trojans*, and to their Descendants the *Romans*, she declares it to be upon these Conditions;

*Sit Latium, sint Albani per secula reges.*

*Sit Romana potens Italia virtute propago.*

*Occidit, occideritque suas cum nomine Troja.*

But of this too much. I shall now follow the EXAMINER towards his Conclusion, where I find the following Passage. Some Men, says he, *undisguise themselves*



(II)

*selves by putting on their Masks; a Strumpet and a Robber are never so well known, as when their Visors are on. Therefore the Character of Archimago is easily seen thro', and fully explain'd by all the Faction.* What Tim means here I can't tell, but of this I'm sure, that if the Character of Archimago is easily seen thro', it is a Sign it's very well drawn and very like; which is such a Commendation of the Poet as I did not expect from him. But thus it fares with injudicious Scriblers, when they bestow either their Censure or their Praise; and I can't but pity the EXAMINER's Masters to be got into the Hands of such a Quack, who promiseth them long Life, and at the same time is in a Method to destroy them very quickly. But now he has work'd himself up to such a Heighth of Insolence as exceeds all Bounds; for a little afterwards he makes use of that sacred Title, *Pater Patriæ*, the Father of his Country, without applying it to the Throne. That solemn Appellation, than which the Roman Senate and People could find none greater to bestow upon the Great *Augustus*, and of which *Augustus* himself thought so highly, that he could not receive it without Tears, that express'd his Sense of it better than the strongest Words: This, I say, doth the EXAMINER bestow beneath the Throne. But I hope to whomsoever this trait'rous fawning Sycophant may apply this most Venerable Title, no one will have the Impudence to thank him for it, while our good Queen, the Mother of her Country, lives. After this he concludes with a sage Reflection of his own, *That to have Treason and Sedition utter'd in the Name and Language of SPENCER, is an Iniquity that has few Prece-*

*Precedents ; and that he has met with nothing like it, except the Cento Nuptialis in Ausonius.*

And now, Sir, I have only to beg your Pardon for detaining you so long, upon so trifling a Subject as an EXAMINER, and to assure you that I am, &c.

Dec. 19. 1713.

